



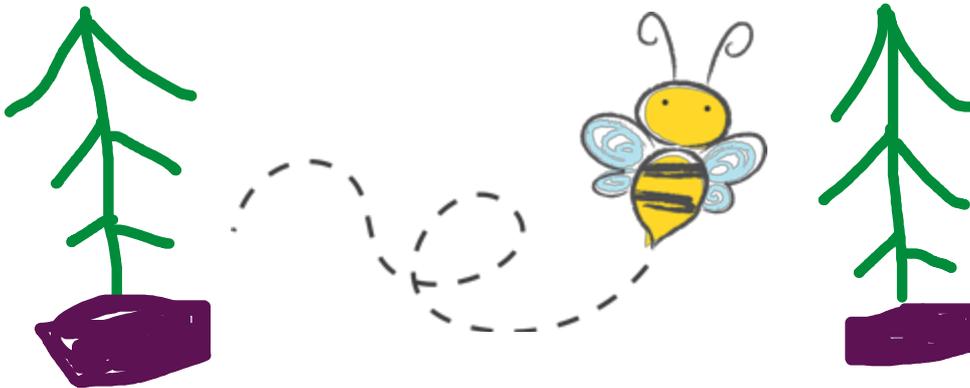
Registered Charity No. 1121231

Newsletter

December 2020

Editors Gwyn Marsh and Dorothea Jones

Season's Greetings



With help
from Sampa 3

AGM

Due to the ongoing Covid situation, this year's AGM was virtual via Zoom.

As well as presentation of reports, voting for the club committee and 'presentation' of trophies. Zoom 'break out rooms' were tried for group chats. This seemed popular and might be used at future meetings.

A few changes were made to the committee for 2021.

Chairman	Gillian Jones
Secretary	Francesca Barham (co-opted until next AGM)
Education Sec.	Steve Troll
Webmaster	Varsha Kirkby

Other positions are unchanged.

The website will be updated shortly with this new information.

News from the Committee

We said farewell to Fiona Matheson (Chairman and Education) and Mike Knapp (Webmaster) and we thank them both for their sterling work on the committee over the past few years.

As well as our committee, we have a wider management team responsible for our library, the newsletter and organising our honey show. Although this has been an unusual year, everyone is working hard behind the scenes to keep our club up and running for members. Work is ongoing to produce next year's Beginners Course online course. We currently have 30 signed up for a February start, so we are full!

We wondered whether the Zoom format could be used to help any of our members who have particular beekeeping topics they are unsure of or feel more information would be helpful. Informal online discussions with interested members and some of our resident 'experts' could be arranged if there is enough interest.

Please get in touch with Jim Liness, our Beginners Apiary Manager apiary@chalfontsbeekeepers.co.uk with any beekeeping issues.

Dorothie Jones

National Bee Unit Annual Hive Count

The National Bee Unit annual hive count gives important information about the number and distribution of beehives in the UK. At the moment, registering on the BeeBase is voluntary. The advantage of registering is disease notifications for your area and access to information regarding all aspects of beekeeping.

"To update your BeeBase record, click on the link <https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/beebase/secure/beekeeper/hiveCensus.cfm> and submit your response by 31st December 2020. It is important that you update your record, even if this is to confirm that you currently have no colonies.

If you have any further questions visit the Hive Count page on BeeBase or contact Hive.count@apha.gov.uk

When updating my hives on the site, I thought I would check through my BeeBase records. I was astonished to find there were 298 apiaries within a 10Km radius – so how many hives?!!! Are we reaching beekeeper saturation point? What are the implications for other pollinators and disease transmission?

Outgoing Committee Members



Fiona Matheson - Chair

Fiona has served on the committee as newsletter editor, education co-ordinator, secretary and chairman and has given much time and effort to the continuing development of club activities. Her energy, enthusiasm, organisational skills and powers of persuasion have contributed hugely to the ongoing highly respected reputation of our club.

Fiona was presented with Sarah Wyndham-Lewis's book, 'Planting for Pollinators' and three shrubs suggested as attractive to bees; Hebe Sutherlandii, variegated myrtle and ceanothus.

Hopefully Fiona's garden will be buzzing with bees next summer. Happy gardening Fiona and thank you.

Mike Knapp – Web Master

Mike was instrumental in redesigning the club web profile, ensuring that it was in line with new technology and accessible to all members.

In addition to his full-time job and his input to the committee and web site set up, Mike love his bikes and has spent time travelling the world with them. He appreciates a glass of red wine and has been enjoying learning about vegetarian cookery. Mike was presented with 'The Hairy Bikers Veggie Feasts' and 6 bottles of red wine to complement the recipes.

Happy cooking Mike and thank you.

Gillian Jones presented the gifts and took the photos.



BBKA Starvation Alert

Observations from beekeepers and Bee Inspectors across the UK suggest that some colonies of bees are becoming short of food.

Please monitor your colonies throughout the coming months and feed as required to ensure your bees do not starve. A standard full size British National colony needs between 20-25 kg of stores to successfully overwinter. If they need feeding at this time then fondant should be used. This should be placed above the brood nest so that the bees are able to access it easily.

For further information, please see the '[Best Practice Guidance No. 7 - Feeding Bees Sugar](#)' on the following BeeBase

Page: <http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/index.cfm?pageid=167>

It has also been observed that Varroa levels in some hives are starting to increase again. This may be due to a number of factors, but the exceptionally mild weather this autumn has encouraged some colonies to produce more brood than usual which has allowed an increase in mite reproduction.

Please monitor mite levels and treat accordingly.

For further information, please see the 'Managing Varroa' Advisory leaflet on the following BeeBase Page: <http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/index.cfm?pageid=167>



Spot the bee?

Colossus Survey

Some members may already be aware of this survey. If not, it is well worth visiting the website to see how their work is contributing to the knowledge and understanding of bees and beekeeping methods internationally.

"The survey has now been running for several months, and aims to identify how beekeepers find information in order to improve the quality of teaching and extension in beekeeping. The survey has been translated into 28 languages, and so far, some 8,765 responses have been received from 83 countries, including 333 from the UK. It has been decided that the closing date for the survey has now been extended until December 31st to give you the opportunity of being involved.

If you haven't done so, please complete the online survey here:

<https://www.bee-survey.com/index.php/877127?lang=en>

It should take you only 10 minutes to complete... If you have already completed the survey, we thank you very much for your help.

Results will be published in popular beekeeping journals and as a scientific paper. The COLOSS (prevention of honey bee COlony LOSSes) association (www.coloss.org) is an international network for beekeeping scientists and advisers. Its name is also its mission; to improve the well-being of honey bees at a global level. There are several projects within COLOSS.

One is the B-RAP group (Bridging Research and Practice), which aims to connect science and advisory work with the practical beekeeper. One of the main problems of cooperation between researchers, advisors and beekeepers is a lack of communication and differences in perspectives. Hence this survey to ask beekeepers how we can help you and how we can reach you.

Sent on behalf of national coordinators for the COLOSS B-RAP group.

Norman Carreck (norman.carreck@btinternet.com)

Alison Gray (a.j.gray@strath.ac.uk)"

Remote Hive Monitor

The club has purchased a Remote Beehive Monitoring System for 2 hives at the training apiary. The system installed during the summer of 2020. Information from the system can be viewed on the club website.

Main Meetings for 2021

It looks unlikely that we will be able to meet as a group for a while. Although the virtual meetings don't provide the same opportunity for social interaction, Helen ensures we still have interesting and engaging speakers. The "break out' sessions for the virtual AGM seems to have worked well, so there is a possibility that they might be tried for main meetings.

January 26th 2021

Brian Durk will talk about 'Bees and Elephants '

Brian is a founder member of Bees Abroad, a charity set up to help disadvantaged people in sub-Saharan Africa earn a living through selling products from their hives. So, what connection do elephants have to bees?

February 23rd 2021

Stewart Spinks from the Norfolk Honey Company

Many of you may know Stewart from the beekeeping videos he produces on all aspects of beekeeping. Should be an interesting and informative talk.

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